

FROM SIENA TO ROME

and the demon, with the many thoughts he brings, never sleep, but are always ready to see if we are sleeping, to be able to enter in, and like thieves plunder the city of the soul; and, even as our own soul, so, too, is the mystical body of Holy Church surrounded by many enemies. Thus thou seest that those who are set for columns and supporters of Holy Church have become her persecutors, with the darkness of heresy. We must not sleep, but defeat them with vigils, tears, sweat, with mournful and loving desires, with humble and continual prayer. Like a faithful daughter of Holy Church, pray and constrain the most high and sweet God to help us now in this need; and pray Him to strengthen the Holy Father and give him light. I speak of Pope Urban VI, truly Pope and vicar of Christ on earth. And so I confess, and we are bound to confess, before all the world ; and on no account must we believe whoso should say or hold the contrary, but rather choose death."¹

For more than three months, Catherine remained quietly at Siena, dictating to her secretaries her great mystical book, the *Dtalogio*, which she finished in October, and her letters which she was despatching in all directions, while she awaited the summons to fight her last battle in the Eternal City.

The dates have been preserved in the manuscripts of an unusual number of the letters that she wrote or dictated during these months, beginning with one on August 27, to Madonna Lodovica di Granello Tolomei, on true and perfect charity.² We find her writing to Pope Urban himself, on September 18, urging him to reform the morals of the clergy, to appoint virtuous bishops, to surround himself with the servants of God and to lean upon their counsel.⁸ On this very day, at Rome, Urban was creating a new College of cardinals to take the place of those who had deserted him, but six of the twenty-nine he had nominated (including the Bishop of Autun, who afterwards received it *from* Clement) refused to accept the hat from his hands. With the exception of Fra Bonaventura Badoara and the Archbishop of

¹ Letter 308 (164). ² Letter 304 (345).

⁸ Letter 305 (17).